DOCTOR WHO

SERIAL F

THE AZTECS

BY JOHN LUCAROTTI

An Adventure in Space & Time

Doctor Who – An Adventure in Space and Time

The Doctor banged the tip of his walking-cane against the cold stone floor. "Human sacrifice is their tradition, their religion," he stormed. "There's nothing we can do about it!"

"I had to try," pleaded Barbara, her voice wavering slightly.

"Yes, and what happened? Tlotoxl lost faith in you. Our lives are in danger, and Susan is locked up in some kind of seminary!"

"Well, at least she's safe there," said Barbara, averting her eyes from the Doctor's cold stare.

"Safe!? Safe, my dear child! She was perfectly safe here until you started meddling!"

"Look, I wanted it to rain without that man being killed. I wanted them to see that his death was unnecessary."

The Doctor swung his face close to Barbara's. "But don't you realise? He wanted to be offered to the gods. It made him feel one!"

Barbara shook her head. "I just didn't think about it..."

"No! That's just it! You didn't think!"

The richly adorned woman turned abruptly away, her mask of defiance crumbling as tears welled in her eyes. "Oh, go away...Leave me alone..."

At sight of Barbara's tears the old man's face softened too, realising that his stern words were not helping matters. He put a hand on her shoulder. "I'm sorry, my dear," he apologised gently. "I didn't mean to be so harsh with you...However, what's done is done and now it's up to you what happens next."

Barbara glanced up. "Me?"

"Yes, you'll have to hold Tlotoxl off."

"How can I? He's lost faith in me. He thinks I'm a false goddess."

('The Warriors of Death' - 30th. May 1964)

STORY SIX 'THE AZTECS'

Barbara and Susan step from the TARDIS, to find themselves in the gloomy darkness of an Aztec tomb. As they look around, Barbara slips an ornate bracelet onto her wrist, and Susan accidentally releases the secret opening to the tomb. Excitedly, she returns to the TARDIS to inform the others. Barbara takes a look outside the tomb, but her presence is witnessed by Autloc, High Priest of Knowledge, and she is taken away. The three other travellers leave the tomb shortly afterwards, to be separated from the TARDIS as the tomb entrance becomes re-sealed. They are greeted warmly by Autloc, who takes them before Barbara. Much to their surprise, Barbara is now being hailed as the reincarnation of the Aztec High Priest, Yetaxa (by virtue of the bracelet she wears), and is attired in a rich costume befitting her new-found status.

Ian is persuaded to represent the gods as their warrior against the Aztec champion, Ixta. Susan remains at Barbara's side as her handmaiden, and the Doctor is sent to the Garden of the Aged, "that he may sit in comfort". The Doctor meets Cameca, a woman whose wisdom and knowledge he seeks to find a way of re-entering the tomb.

From the moment she assumes power, Barbara's avowed intention is to protect the ill-fated Aztec civilisation from destruction, by opposing their primitive ritual of human sacrifice. In this, she finds herself pitted against the evil High Priest of Sacrifice, Tlotoxl. Tlotoxl is keen to re-assume the power he held before Barbara's arrival, and wishes to reveal her as the false goddess he knows her to be. His efforts to achieve this include denouncing her in public, forcing her to condemn Susan to death, and offering her a poisonous herbal mixture.

Ian fares little better in his efforts to tackle the proud Ixta. The first contest is a victory for Ian, utilising knowledge and fighting methods from centuries in advance of that of the Aztecs. Ixta wins the second bout by devious means. He enlists the Doctor's unwitting help in developing a drug to sap the strength of an opponent during battle. The Doctor is horrified to learn that the opponent is Ian!

All is brought to a conclusion on 'the day of darkness' (the sun's eclipse). Ian faces Ixta in battle for the last time; the Doctor devises a method of entering the tomb; Barbara convinces the peaceful Autloc of the horrors of human sacrifice; and Susan escapes a cruel marriage to the next victim of sacrifice. As darkness falls, the travellers escape to the TARDIS, leaving Tlotoxl to perform his gruesome ritual.

As one danger ends, another begins. The TARDIS has re-landed, but all the control dials indicate that the ship is still moving!

CMS

Editor.....Tim Robins
Deputy Editor.....Gary Hopkins
Artwork.....Stuart Glazebrook
Anthony Clark
Writers this issue.....Jeremy Bentham
Gary Hopkins
John Peel
'DOCTOR WHO' copyright.....BBCtv

STORY REVIEW

"HOW SHALL A MAN KNOW HIS GODS"

The Aztecs were a strange people; an historical enigma. As Susan says of them: "It's incredible, isn't it? Beauty and horror, developing hand-in-hand." They built beautiful cities, with elaborate gardens, and yet had the cult of human sacrifice, where the heart was torn from a living person and offered, still-beating, to the sun god. It is into this environment that the TARDIS brings the travellers.

'The Aztecs' is a superb example of how to film a genuinely historical 'Doctor Who' story, giving so totally the air of the Aztecs as to be positively enthralling. There are small historical inaccuracies - the lack of the ruling king, and the use of too many clothes on the people - but the general lines and many particular points of history are entirely authentic. John Lucarotti has written yet another story grounded in fact, and telling a compelling tale. Dovetailing with this to produce such a magnificent serial is the set-design work of Barry Newbery, who must have expended a great deal of energy in producing clever and authentic backgrounds. The backdrops of the Aztec city, with its lines and buildings, are a joy to behold, and give the small sets a real illusion of depth. And the music of Richard Rodney Bennett (now an internationally-famous film score composer) is very eerie and menacing, especially his moody introductory piece to the tomb of Yetaxa. Direction and acting are faultless, although it would be hard to single out specific roles for praise without missing others equally as good.

The story is basically that of personalities. Barbara versus Tlotoxl, and Barbara complementing Autloc; Ian versus Ixta; and the Doctor with Cameca. Barbara, having been taken for the reincarnation of the High Priest Yetaxa, must continue to convince Tlotoxl and Autloc of her divinity, otherwise she and the three other travellers could well end up being sacrificed. When Tlotoxl, perturbed by her insistence upon the end of sacrifices, sees that either he is wrong, or she is a false goddess, he denounces her. But he has to have proof...One horribly agonising moment occurs when he gives Barbara a poisoned drink. Having discovered the truth of Tlotoxl's terrible plan, she throws the cup to the ground and thoroughly cows him with her rage. "I only meant to test you!" he defends himself. "With poison?" she exclaims. "Yetaxa would have lived! The gods are immortal!" Barbara glares at him in disgust. "Well, I would have died! I am not Yetaxa!" Tlotoxl can hardly believe this open admission of guilt. "False! False! I knew it!" "And who'll believe you?" Barbara snarls. "I warn you, Tlotoxl, you say one word against me to the people, and I'll have them destroy you!" She has his measure.

With Autloc, the story is different. He is gentle and thoughtful, and Barbara attempts to convince him that sacrifice is unnecessary. Eventually, she gets through to him, and he leaves for the wilderness to work out his thoughts away from other men. As the Doctor tells Barbara: "That's the good you've done. You failed to save a civilisation, but you helped one man." Barbara has indeed tried to save a civilisation - by preventing human sacrifice. "Well, they've made me a goddess," she explains, "and I forbid it!" The Doctor is horrified as she expounds her aims. "If I could start the destruction of everything that's evil here, then everything that's good will survive when Cortés lands!" The Doctor tries hard to dissuade her from this noble, well-intentioned course of action. "But you can't rewrite history! Not one line!" Nevertheless, she tries...but, inevitably, she fails. "What's the point of travelling in time and space if you can't change anything?" she cries.

Ian and Ixta have a more straightforward relationship. If Ian is the chosen warrior of the gods, Ixta is superfluous as leader of the Aztec army; so Ixta must prove himself better than Ian. Although Ixta is a trained warrior, Ian has one big advantage over him - his knowledge of fighting. Ixta fights rough and ready, but Ian defeats him using wrestling and boxing, two arts of which Ixta is ignorant; and in their first encounter, interestingly enough, Ian wins by the use of what was later to become famous as Spock's Vulcan nerve-pinch! Tlotoxl is startled to find Ixta collapsed, and Ian not even breathing heavily. He asks Autloc: "You saw the blow?" "There was no blow," Autloc answers, "He fought with his thumb!" Ixta wins the second round by trickery. During their third contest, Ian accidentally knocks Ixta from the pinnacle of the temple. Ixta is slain - a victim of his own pride and unbending arrogance.

Perhaps the most subtle relationship in the story is that between the Doctor and Cameca. He begins by gently flirting with her, simply to glean information about the tomb wherein is locked the TARDIS; but this light-hearted romance changes its tone before the story is concluded. Cameca falls in love with this charming (!) stranger, and when the Doctor brews her a drink from cocoa beans he is unaware of the significance attached to this rite, until she enlightens him. "Oh, sweet-favoured man! You have declared your love for me! And I acknowledge and accept your gentle proposal." Having somewhat absent-mindedly acquired a fiancee, the Doctor insists to Ian that this isn't serious: but is he being honest? At the end of the story, he leaves the brooch that Cameca gave him as a token of her love outside the TARDIS before entering the ship. Then he re-emerges and almost guiltily pockets it again before rushing back inside. It seems to me that he is being entirely honest when he tells her in farewell: "You're a very fine woman, Cameca, and you'll always be very, very dear to me." The Doctor did, despite his claims to the contrary, fall in love - but it was an impossible love, and they both knew it.

Lest the gravity of the story seem too much, there were many lighter-hearted moments, each played out superbly. The Doctor's romance is very funny, simply because he is the only one who doesn't know the significance of what he is doing! Upon seeing Tlotoxl for the first time, Ian describes him as "the local butcher" - very aptly as they later discover.

'The Aztecs' is a story that is unjustifiably neglected in the history of 'Doctor Who'. A four-part serial, tucked neatly betwixt two sizeable science-fiction serials. Perhaps a position which merits little attention. However, like a jewel set within its clasp, 'The Aztecs' has a brilliance equalled by few other serials. It is a careful, fascinating and always exciting tale, and supports the idea that historical adventures should always play a part in 'Doctor Who'.

WRITTEN BY JOHN PEEL

TLOTOXL

WRITTEN BY

JOHN PEEL

Tlotoxl is, in many ways, a deep character; superficially evil, yet intensely pious; who is apparently destructive, yet who upholds Aztec society against dangerous and heretical innovations. Cameca senses Tlotoxl's motives, and comments perceptively to the Doctor that he is "determined to destroy Yetaxa". But the Doctor sees the real man when he replies: "He must do, to safeguard his own beliefs".

Tlotoxl is the High Priest of Sacrifice, a position he takes with utmost seriousness. To uphold society and the Universe, sacrifice must be performed, for it is only through representative death that life for the whole people can be retained. Tlotoxl's fight against Barbara/Yetaxa is based upon this belief: since sacrifice is right, and Yetaxa opposes sacrifice, then Yetaxa is a false goddess - "and I shall destroy her!" He is cunning and devious, and he must prove that Barbara is an imposter to safeguard himself and society. "I will ask you," he says to her, "How shall a man know his gods?" "By the signs of their divinity," replies Barbara. "And what if thieves walk among the gods?" asks Tlotoxl. Barbara smiles. "Then, indeed," she returns, "how shall a man know?"

But he realises that Barbara is too clever to be caught out, and it is then that the worst side of his nature begins to show itself. How can he destroy her? "She is too clever...Her handmaiden! Alone in the seminary..." To Tlotoxl, everyone else is expendable - if only he can be proved right. He tells Ixta to strike down Autloc, the High Priest of Knowledge, and to frame Ian for the deed. Ixta is horrified. "To strike down a High Priest? There is no greater offence!" Tlotoxl snarls: "Would you see us humiliated?"

This is Tlotoxl's other great failing: his pride. "The rains will come, and power will again be ours." He loves power; the holding of authority, the wielding of it. Constantly, he strives to turn his opponents against each other, so enabling him to come out on top. It is this pride which turns him initially against Ian, even before he doubts Barbara's divinity. "Autloc," he asks. "Who serves Yetaxa?" "We do," the older man replies, "as High Priests of the temple." Tlotoxl regards him shrewdly. "What purpose, then, serve the others?" He already begins to feel power slipping away from him, and he fights to ensure that none shall take his place.

Ironically enough, Tlotoxl is not different to the rest of the Aztecs; merely the incarnation of their vices and virtues. "Tlotoxl's evil," Barbara comments to Ian, "and he'll make everyone else the same." But this isn't true: "They are the same, Barbara. That's the whole point," Ian answers. "You keep insisting that Tlotoxl's the odd-man-out, but he isn't!"

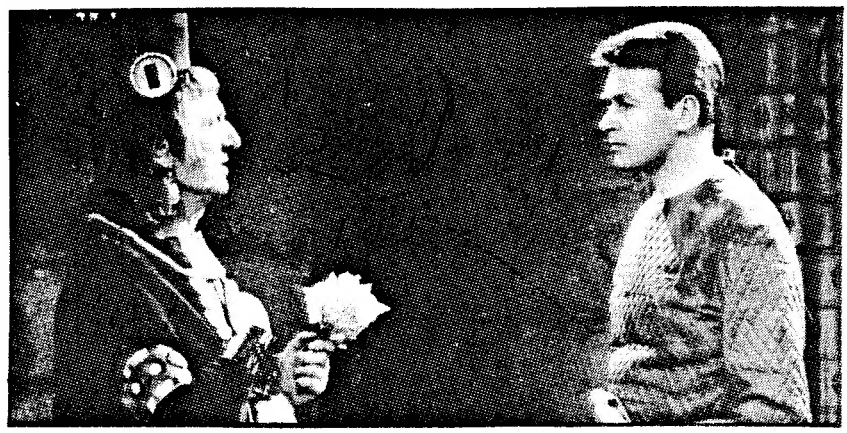
As darkness fell upon the land of the Aztecs, Tlotoxl moved purposefully to the sacrificial stone, his twisted body adding to his demonic bearing. Already, the Perfect Victim awaited his deliverance into the hands of his gods. Tlotoxl, his painted face raised to the darkened sky, began: "Great god of the Sun and the warriors, I, Tlotoxl, thank you for this victory. In your honour, let perfect sacrifice be made..." He is victorious, and vindicated in the eyes of his people. But his victory spells doom for the Aztec civilisation. As history records, by winning...he also lost.

Thus was, perhaps, the greatest ever 'Doctor Who' villain...

AUTLOC

WRITTEN BY

JEREMY BENTHAM



In writing 'The Aztecs' John Lucarotti styled a lot of the drama towards presenting the curious juxtaposition between nobility and savagery. The character of Autloc is all too clearly meant to portray all that was good in the Aztecs. As High Priest of Knowledge he ruled the tribe alongside Tlotoxl before the coming of the "reincarnated Yetaxa". He is shown to be older by a long margin than the zealous Tlotoxl, and as such is credited with being wiser in thought and deed. He knew, as Tlotoxl knew, that the Sun would shine again after an eclipse, whether the Perfect Victim was sacrificed or not. However, wisdom of years and an appreciation of the arts of politics had taught him that the best way to remain in power is to have the faith of the people. Such were the Aztec customs that human blood sacrifice was accepted as the norm; that to go against it was a blasphemy against the Sun God, which would not go unpunished.

That was before Barbara appeared on the scene - wearing the bracelet of the coiled serpent. As a person of intellect and kindness, Autloc found much kindred sympathy with the views openly expressed by the returned spirit of Yetaxa. So much so that he staked all his faith in her, confident that she would bring about the salvation of the Aztec people.

This is not to say that Autloc was so gifted that he knew the Aztecs were doomed by their own customs. What he did believe was Barbara's prophecy about the destruction of their civilisation by the coming Conquistadores, led by Cortés of Spain. That foretelling of the future, **coupled** with all the changes Barbara/Yetaxa intimated she wished to make, gave Autloc the faith to believe that, if he sided with her, the predicted doom for his people might be averted.

After the debacle of the rain sacrifice and Tlotoxl's vow to destroy the false goddess, the Doctor advises Barbara to play off one against the other; that the more Barbara's divinity is doubted by Tlotoxl, the more she must look to strengthening Autloc's standpoint. Yet Autloc's wisdom was great enough that he perceived something was afoot that he did not fully understand. When Barbara proposed the sweeping change of abolishing human sacrifice, the reaction from Autloc was simply: "In all humility, I beseech you. Do not prove false to me." In other words, he would support Yetaxa with all the power of his office, but should it be proven that she was lying to him - that she was not, after all, a true goddess - then his faith in the Aztec nation as a whole would be gone.

There lies the twist. For Barbara was lying, and when the deception was proved to him - with Barbara having to ask him to intercede on her behalf to save Susan from being pierced with thorns - the realisation was too much for Autloc to bear. "Would you sacrifice us (the Aztecs) to save your handmaiden?" he asked, shortly before taking himself off into permanent exile in the Wilderness.

A man at conflict with his people is a good, simple summation of Autloc. A tragic figure who was given false hope, albeit for noble reasons. As Barbara said: "...the reasonable man, the civilised one, the one who will listen to advice"; to which Ian replied, "You can't fight a whole way of life". Autloc; a peaceful, gentle man, whose sensitive and intelligent disposition was found, in the end, to be out of step with the development of the great Aztec people.

TECHNICAL OBSERVATIONS

Insert of the TARDIS leaving the island on Marinus seen briefly at the beginning of the new serial.

Barry Newbery's research on 'The Aztecs' was very thorough. His set designs even featured the carvings from temple walls in their depiction of speech bubbles above the illustrations.

'External' scenery for 'The Aztecs' was provided by the use of very elaborate backdrops to suggest the distant pyramids and buildings of the Aztec city.

Visual licence was taken with the Aztec costumes, giving the actors more clothing than was customarily worn by the original Mexican indians.

'The Aztecs' was very much a melodramatic presentation, where the actors and actresses carried the bulk of the production. The six basic sets remained constant throughout the four episodes - hence their intricate construction.

John Ringham portrayed Tlotoxl very much like the traditional, stereotyped image of Shakespeare's demonic King Richard the Third, down to the sinisterly pitched voice and the crooked back.

Aztec technology was accurately reproduced to the smallest details; for example, stone knives were used, and wooden swords with jade cutting edges. The Aztecs never learned the arts of working in hard metals.

During the recording of episodes two and three of 'The Aztecs', Carole Ann Ford (Susan Foreman) took a two-week holiday break. For these two episodes she appears only on telecine insert scenes, prerecorded separately from the live studio work, and using just the one set (the seminary). Each actor and actress in the regular cast had two weeks holiday during the first season. The Doctor (William Hartnell) vanished for two episodes (3 and 4) of 'The Keys of Marinus'. Barbara (Jacqueline Hill) was absent during episodes 4 and 5 of 'The Sensorites'. William Russell, like Carole Ann Ford, appeared only on telecine during his two-week break. Ian made only fleeting appearances, on film and with voice-overs, for episodes 2 and 3 of 'The Reign of Terror'.

The final scene of episode three saw Ian trapped in a storm drainage tunnel, as the water level rose rapidly. To avoid the difficult and expensive use of water in the Lime Grove studio, this sequence was accomplished by simple super-imposition of gushing water onto shots of Ian moving through the tunnels.

The fight between Ian and Ixta in episode four was done at the Ealing studios, on an elevated and enlarged sacrificial altar set. Derek Ware and David Anderson doubled for Ian and Ixta respectively for this fight, their faces hidden beneath ceremonial masks of the condor and the jaguar.

Footage of the Sun being eclipsed in episode four, and the thunderstorm in episode one, were stock films. The effect of the Moon was achieved in the studio, by a light being shone onto a backcloth from behind.

'The Aztecs' was John Lucarotti's favourite serial for 'Doctor Who', which he chose to write simply because "their civilisation intrigued me. They were, at the same time, a cultivated yet savage people, who practised human sacrifice. Also, they didn't know about the wheel. So one became the key to the Doctor's escape - and he took it with him so as not to interfere with history."

PRODUCTION CREDITS

SERIAL "F" FOUR EPISODES BLACK AND WHITE

"THE TEMPLE OF EVIL"	-	23rd. May	1964
"THE WARRIORS OF DEATH"	-	30th. May	1964
"THE BRIDE OF SACRIFICE"	-	6th. June	1964
"THE DAY OF DARKNESS"	-	13th. June	1964

CAST

DOCTOR WHO.....WILLIAM HARTNELL
IAN CHESTERTON.....WILLIAM RUSSELL
BARBARA WRIGHT.....JACQUELINE HILL
SUSAN FOREMAN.....CAROLE ANN FORD

AUTLOC.....KEITH PYOTT
TLOTOXL.....JOHN RINGHAM
IXTA.....IAN CULLEN
CAMECA.....MARGOT VAN DER BURGH
FIRST VICTIM.....TOM BOOTH
AZTEC CAPTAIN.....DAVID ANDERSON
TONILA.....WALTER RANDALL
PERFECT VICTIM.....ANDRÉ BOULAY

CREW

FIGHT ARRANGERS.....DAVID ANDERSON
DEREK WARE
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....RON CRADDOCK
ASSISTANT FLOOR MANAGER.....KEN HOWARD
COSTUME SUPERVISORS.....DAPHNE DARE
TONY PEARCE
MAKE-UP SUPERVISOR.....JILL SUMMERS
INCIDENTAL MUSIC....RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT
CONDUCTED BY.....MARCUS DODS
STORY EDITOR.....DAVID WHITAKER
DESIGNER.....BARRY NEWBERY
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER.....MERVYN PINFIELD
PRODUCER.....VERITY LAMBERT
DIRECTOR.....JOHN CROCKETT

BBCtv

Compiled by
GARY HOPKINS